

Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10
NSAE-00 INRE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 MCE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1882

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 3210

FOR SOBER FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA

SUBJECT: ASSURANCES ON F-15

1. HAVE DISCUSSED POSSIBLE ASSURANCES ON F-15'S AT LENGTH WITH BOTH PRINCE SAUD AND PRINCE TURKI. DISCUSSIONS WITH LATTER WERE IN MORE DEPTH AND HE SEEMS TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEM AND IS MORE SYMPATHETIC THAN FOREIGN MINISTER. THESE DISCUSSIONS COVERED ALL POINTS IN MEMORANDUM AND PROPOSED DRAFT LETTER OF LUCY BENSON.

2. AS YOU FULLY RECOGNIZE, QUESTION OF ASSURANCES, INCLUDING THE FORM THEREOF, IS HIGHLY SENSITIVE ONE. BEST APPROACH IS FOR VERBAL ASSURANCES
FORM SAG OFFICIALS ON WHICH SECRETARY COULD BASE STATEMENTS TO THE CONGRESS. IF THAT IS NOT SUFFICIENT, HERE IS OUR ASSESSMENT OF WHAT MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE TO SAUDIS IN WRITTEN FORM IF RIGHT APPROACH IS MADE:

(A) THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA HAS NO AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS AGAINST ANY NATION AND WILL USE THE F-15 ONLY FOR THE SELF DEFENSE FO THE TERRITORY OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA.

(B) THE GOVERNMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA WILL NOT TRANSFER THE F-15 TO
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ANY OTHER COUNTRY NOR PERMIT NATIONALS OF OTHER COUNTRIES TO TRAIN ON THE AIRCRAFT.

(C) SAG WILL AGREE TO PROVIDE CAREFULLY FOR THE PHYSICAL SECURITY OF THE AIRCRAFT AND THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WILL SURVEY SAUDI SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS CAREFULLY PRIOR TO DELIVERY OF THE AIRCRAFT TO ENSURE TH

AT

ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS ARE TAKEN TO PREVENT UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS FROM OBTAINING ACCESS TO THE AIRCRAFT OR INFORMATION ABOUT IT.

3. WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT BELIEVE THAT SAG WILL AGREE TO WRITTEN RESTRICTION

OF USE OF BASE AT TABUK. VERBAL ASSURANCES ALREADY MADE BY SAG CAN BE REITERATED SO AS TO GIVE SECRETARY BASIS TO ASSURE CONGRESS THAT SUCH PROBABLY WILL NOT HAPPEN. SECRETARY CAN THEN ADD FACT THAT U.S. WILL NOT PROVIDE SUPPORT FACILITIES AT TABUK NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE OPERATION.

LATTER STATEMENT, IF MADE PUBLIC, COULD HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS.

4. LIKEWISE, WRITTEN RESTRICTIONS AGAINST ACQUISITION OF OTHER AIRCRAFT

AND RIGHT OF USG TO REFUSE DELIVERY IF MILITARY BALANCE IS ALTERED WOULD

BE EXTREMELY OFFENSIVE AND HARD-TO-IMPOSSIBLE TO SELL IF REQUIRED TO BE

IN WRITING. VERBAL ASSURANCES POSSIBLY CAN BE GIVEN THAT TO PRESENT INTENTION NOT TO ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT. RESERVATION OF RIGHT TO CANCEL WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR SAUDIS TO ACCEPT AND IN OUR

JUDGMENT WOULD BE SO OFFENSIVE AS TO KILL SALE.

5. SITUATION HERE RE SALE IS EXCEEDINGLY TENSE. (SEE RIYADH 295 FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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PICTURE OF FAHD'S ATTITUDE.) THIS ATMOSPHERE REINFORCES OUR JUDGMENT THAT ASSURANCES MUST BE HANDLED WITH EXTREME CARE.

6. AM WORKING ON AVAILABILITY OF PRINCE TURKI IN WASHINGTON AND WILL ADVISE FURTHER LATER TODAY.
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Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Subject: ASSURANCES ON F-15
TAGS: MASS, SA, EG, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
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